

**FCRHA POLICY STATEMENT ON RESIDENTS WHO MUST
PERFORM COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Policy Statement

The FCRHA's policy on performing community service while a resident in a public housing unit, effective October 1, 1999, is that each adult public housing resident, not exempted by the Act, shall perform at least 8 hours of community service per month or at least 96 hours per year. The exemptions are discussed below. Generally, the tenant should perform the required service throughout the year, on a month to month basis. However, in some cases, residents may be allowed to complete the requirement by blocking their time requirement. For example, some Community Service organizations may require a participant to commit to provide a minimum number of hours per week of community service before they are allowed to sign up for the organization's community service program, i.e. the Volunteer Center of Fairfax County requires a minimum of 6 hours per week or 24 hours per month. In this case, the resident will be given credit for the amount of time served beyond the 8 hour minimum per month.

**How the FCRHA Will Implement and Administer
the Community Service Requirement**

The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is responsible for implementing and administering the Community Service requirement. HCD has designated the respective Senior Housing Service Specialists, in conjunction with their Lead Housing Services Specialist and Housing Services Specialists, with the responsibility of notifying those public housing tenants who are required to complete community service.¹ Normally, a tenant will be notified when they enter public housing, or if they are already a resident, at the time of annual recertification of income.

HCD's goal is to direct tenants to as many community service opportunities as possible, considering such limitations as age, time availability, language barriers, transportation, and child care. Community service opportunities are available in many public and private organizations ranging from a tenant's own public housing development to a private nonprofit organization like the Volunteer Center of Fairfax County, Inc. The Volunteer Center's mission is to initiate and lead efforts to strengthen the community and enhance all citizens' lives through effective volunteerism and service. The Center acts as a clearinghouse for information and referrals and connects individuals with nonprofit organizations and public agencies. The Center issues a monthly flyer listing volunteer opportunities, special events and training. They also advertise volunteer opportunities through local newspapers, radio and the internet.

¹ The HCD initially conducted an analysis of the public housing residents to determine who must start the community service requirement as of October 1, 1999. These residents were notified by letter. As new tenants enter the program, they will be informed of the community service requirement.

Meaningful community service can offer a variety of opportunities. For example, a public housing tenant may want to be an interpreter, perform desktop publishing, design graphics, answer hotlines, be a companion, teach an adult to read, assist victims, clear a park or trail, work at a library, rake leaves, deliver food, or sort food in a shelter.

Once, a tenant has been informed by HCD's Housing Services Specialist about the community service requirement, it will be the tenant's responsibility to select a community service organization and the type of service opportunity they want to perform. HCD will require that the tenant formally document their hours of community service perform. For this purpose, HCD will provide the tenant with a Community Service Program – Time Sheet that contains a variety of information categories that the tenant must complete, including a signature of the agency or organization supervisor. The tenant has the responsibility to ensure that the time sheet is delivered to HCD's Housing Services Specialist each month by the last day of the month.

Residents performing community service will need to adhere to a new lease provision starting on July 1, 2001, which will set in motion the HUD's noncompliance procedures that apply to family members who are required to fulfill a service requirement but violates this family obligation. The FCRHA's notice to the tenant will state that the FCRHA will not renew the lease at the end of the twelve month lease unless (1) the tenant, and any other noncompliant resident, enter into a written agreement with the FCRHA to cure the noncompliance, or the family provides written assurance satisfactory to the FCRHA that the tenant or other noncompliant resident no longer resides in the unit. The tenant may also request a grievance hearing on the FCRHA determination. In the agreement, the tenant will be required to cure the noncompliance by completing the additional hours of community service or economic self-sufficiency activity needed to make up the total number of hours required over the twelve-month term of the new lease.

Exemptions for Community Service

Each adult resident of a public housing project shall contribute 8 hours per month of community service within the community in which that adult resides. HUD exempts the following individuals.

1. An individual 62 years of age or older.
2. A disabled individual or a primary caretaker of an individual.
3. An individual engaged in a work activity. This work activity must be for at least 30 hours per week (FCRHA standard) and include the following:
 - Unsubsidized employment;
 - Subsidized private sector employment;
 - Subsidized public sector employment;

- Work experience (including work associated with the refurbishing of publicly assisted housing) if sufficient private sector employment is not available;
 - On-the-job training
 - Job search and job readiness assistance;
 - Community service programs;
 - Vocational educational training (not to exceed 12 months with respect to any individual);
 - Job skills training directly related to employment;
 - Education directly related to employment, in the case of a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency;
 - Satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate; and
 - The provision of child care services to an individual who is participating in a community service program.
4. An individual that meets the requirements for being exempted from having to engage in a work activity under the state program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act or under any other Welfare program of the state in which public housing agency is located, including a State-administered welfare to work program. These requirements include:
- Any individual, including all minor caretakers, under sixteen years of age.
 - Any individual at least 16, but has not yet attained the age of 19, who is enrolled full-time in elementary or secondary school, including vocational or technical school programs. The vocational or technical school must be equivalent to secondary school.
 - Any individual unable to participate because of a temporary medical condition that prevents entry into any level of community service, as determined by a physician. The individual must provide the Resident Services Specialist a written statement from such physician to specify that he is incapacitated, the nature and scope of the incapacity, and the duration of the incapacity. If the physician indicates that the individual is able to participate in community service, but is limited in the types of activities that can be performed, the Resident Service Specialist must work with the individual to find suitable work activities. The Resident Services Specialist must re-evaluate the participants' incapacity at the time prescribed by the medical statement or every 60 days, whichever comes first.
 - Any individual who is incapacitated, as determined by receipt of Social Security Disability benefits or Supplemental Security Income.

- Any individual sixty years of age or older.
 - Any individual who is the sole care giver of another member of the household who is incapacitated, and whose presence is essential for the care of the member on a substantially continuous basis, shall be exempt from participation in the Community Service requirement. Incapacity is determined by receipt of Social Security Disability Benefits or Supplemental Security Income. The sole other condition under which an individual may be determined incapacitated is by a written medical statement from a physician.
 - A parent or caretaker relative of a child under eighteen months of age who personally provides care for the child.
 - A female who is in her fourth through ninth month of pregnancy as determined by a written medical statement provided by a physician.
 - Families where the primary caretakers of a child or children are legal guardians, grandparents, foster parents, or other standing in loco parentis and who are not the adoptive or biological parents of the child.
5. An individual in a family receiving assistance under a state program under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act or under any other Welfare program of the state in which public housing agency is located, including a State-administered welfare to work program, and has not been found by the State or other administering entity to be in noncompliance with such program.